



Disaster News

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MOBILE DISASTER RECOVERY CENTER OPENS NEAR CAMDEN, ALABAMA

MONTGOMERY, Ala. – A Mobile Disaster Recovery Center (MDRC) is open near Camden, according to officials from the State and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Wilcox County was added today to the federal disaster declaration issued to assist the state recover from the tornadoes that struck March 1, 2007.

Disaster victims are urged to register for assistance by first calling **(800) 621-FEMA (3362)** or **TTY (800) 462-7585** for the hearing or speech impaired. Victims can also register online at www.fema.gov or visit the MDRC to meet face-to-face with recovery specialists.

Representatives of the state, federal and voluntary agencies, as well as loan officers from the U.S. Small Business Administration, will be available to answer questions and provide recovery information. Written materials about various assistance programs are also available to individuals and business owners. No cash, checks, debit cards or vouchers are distributed at MDRCs. The centers are for the dissemination of information to assist in recovery by those affected by the tornado.

The hours of operation will be from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. CST 7 days a week until further notice. This MDRC is located at:

North Ferry Marina
East Bank Park
7433 Hwy 28W
Miller's Ferry, AL

Individuals and businesses that were affected by the tornado in Wilcox County are eligible for Individual Assistance, to be coordinated by FEMA, that can include:

- rental payments for temporary housing for those whose homes are unlivable
- grants for home repairs and replacement of essential household items not covered by insurance
- grants to replace personal property and help meet medical, dental, funeral, transportation and other serious disaster-related needs not covered by insurance or other federal, state and charitable aid programs

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- unemployment payments up to 26 weeks for workers who temporarily lost jobs because of the disaster and who do not qualify for other benefits
- low-interest loans to cover residential losses not fully compensated by insurance
- loans for primary residence and personal property, including renter losses; loans for business property losses not fully compensated by insurance; loans for small businesses that have suffered disaster-related cash flow problems and need funds for working capital to recover from the disaster's adverse economic impact
- other relief programs include crisis counseling for those traumatized by the disaster; income tax assistance for filing casualty losses; advisory assistance for legal, veterans benefits and social security matters.

Wilcox County is also eligible to request assistance through FEMA's Public Assistance Program. Under the federal disaster declaration, state and affected local governments receive at least 75 percent of the approved costs for emergency protective measures and debris removal, as well as repairs to:

- Roads and bridges
- Water control facilities
- Buildings and equipment
- Utilities
- Parks/recreational facilities

In addition, the disaster declaration provides for FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program to assist State and local governments in avoiding or lessening the impact of natural hazards through safer building practices and the improvement of existing structures and supporting infrastructure. The program contributes to the development of a long-term comprehensive mitigation program by funding measures designed to achieve the goals of the State Hazard Mitigation Plan.

FEMA manages federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident, initiates mitigation activities and manages the National Flood Insurance Program. FEMA works closely with state and local emergency managers, law enforcement personnel, firefighters and other first responders. FEMA became part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security on March 1, 2003.

Disaster recovery assistance is available without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, economic status or retaliation. If you or someone you know has been discriminated against, you should call FEMA toll-free at 1-800-621-FEMA (3362) or contact your State Office of Equal rights. If suspicious of any abuse of FEMA programs, please contact the fraud hotline at 1-800-323-8603.

FEMA's temporary housing assistance and grants for public transportation expenses, medical and dental expenses, and funeral and burial expenses do not require individuals to apply for an SBA loan. However, applicants who receive SBA loan applications must submit them to SBA loan officers to be eligible for assistance that covers personal property, vehicle repair or replacement, and moving and storage expenses.

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Editors: For more information on Alabama disaster recovery, visit www.fema.gov or ema.alabama.gov